

THE REVOLT OF THE EAST

By the Same Author:

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF INDIA
THE MENACE FROM THE WEST
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EMPIRE
THE REVOLT OF THE EAST
REFORM OR REVOLUTION
AGITATE!

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EMPIRE AND DEMOCRACY
FOOD, MIND AND HEALTH

THE REVOLT OF THE EAST

BY

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TO THE SONS OF INDIA

THESE are times of high adventure. They challenge the manhood in each of you. Gone for ever are the quiet days of peace, a peace in chains. The struggle for freedom surges to and fro; over India hangs the smoke of battle; everywhere we hear the slogan of the attacking hosts. Some of these will suffer in person, or in money or in prospects. But who stands back when India calls? Who fears to fight for India's liberty? If the foe is well entrenched, the stormers are stout of heart and will take no repulse. They grow stronger day by day in numbers, in confidence, in inspiration. Victory is certain. As surely as the sun will rise tomorrow, the last stronghold of the bureaucracy must ere long strike its flag. It is just a question of time. The more united, the bolder the attack, the swifter comes the day of triumph.

Until that day, until India in every way is mistress of her fate, there can be no halt. Hide it, excuse it as they may, all who on

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any pretext shrink from joining the national cause are cowards. Fair words will not do. Forward lies the goal of freedom; every Indian, who does not with voice or pen or purse help towards that goal, wills his mother's bonds.

Is it not happiness to be alive in this day of great events? Is it not glorious to be able to lend a hand in the freeing of India? Think of the generations which have passed, leading lives of dull servitude, unquickened by hope. For you is reserved a higher destiny, for you are brighter days, days of strife, of victories won, when new horizons will be opening before your eyes and new inspiration ever sounding in your ears. With brave hearts, then, do your duty and help on the good work. May the twin stars of freedom and brotherhood, shining before you, ever guide your footsteps aright.

15th May 1921.

BERNARD HOUGHTON.

THE REVOLT OF THE EAST

CHAPTER I THE AFTERMATH OF BUREAUCRATIC IMPERIALISM

He does not die who fights; he is not a slave who does not will it.

—CARDUCCI.

THE bureaucratic Governments in India, whether imperial or provincial, are apt to take credit to themselves for many benefits—such as law, order, a settled system of justice, increased trade—which can and will exist just as well if not better under popular governments. Any ordinary self-respecting rule, even that of a benevolent despot, brings these blessings in its train. But there is one benefit they have conferred on India and Burma which curiously

enough, they have omitted to claim. And yet in the broad crisis it far excels any material advantage. It is indeed beyond price. By their determined opposition to the demands of the people for a share in the government of the land, they have aroused both in Indians and Burmans a spirit of patriotism, a will for self-sacrifice, a zeal for the greatness of their country which has transformed and exalted their whole lives. They have killed the old feeling of dull acquiescence in the orders of authority, whether good or bad. More, they have quenched ancient religious and racial feuds and knit together all men, however divergent in race or religion, in common love for their native land. We have seen a Hindu saint preach in a Muhammadan mosque; we have seen the Hindus sympathise with Muhammadans in their anxiety for the Khilafat, and Muhammadans recommend abstention from the sacrifice of cattle.

I

In Burma the special benefits the bureaucracy has conferred have been the arousing of the national spirit and a healing of the jealousies between Burmans and the Indian settlers in

their land. For these boons Burmans should be grateful. Were self-government to come too easily, were the powers that be to grant it liberally, and spontaneously, instead of through the *force majeure* of the British Parliament, we should not have had this outpouring of the national spirit, the awakening from the apathy which a paternal government always casts and always must cast over its subjects.

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

It was necessary that this virtue, the virtue of patriotism, should manifest itself throughout the nation, and the bureaucracy has, in its own despite it is true, done the necessary service. It has dispelled the drowsy charm itself more in the Burmese people and inspired them with the qualities needed for self-government when conferred. Nothing that is worth having can be won without fighting. Had self-government come too easily, it would have found a part of Burma unprepared to take full advantage of its opportunities and to make it a success. Now all that is changed. Burma is aroused. The spirit of patriotism is abroad in town and country. The people understand what is at

stake, they are filled with hopes for the future ; their pride is touched ; their manhood is exalted. They will to meet other peoples face to face, as free men to free men. They must fulfil worthily their duties under a new constitution, making the name of Burma honoured and loved in the world. When therefore the travails of to-day shall have brought forth the splendours of the future, it will be recognised that, by its very opposition to change, the bureaucracy has conferred on the people it has held so long in tutelage a final and supreme blessing.

II

The fact is, a bureaucratic governing class the world over is apt to commit the same blunders as are committed by it to-day. Take, for instance, what is happening in Ireland to-day. The essential points to note are, firstly, the atrocities and the denial of human rights by which the Coalition Government seeks to crush the Irish, and, secondly, the support given to their policy by a majority of the educated, that is, of the governing class in England. The body of Police known as the Black and Tans commit outrage after outrage

in furtherance of the policy enjoined by the Government. They murder men and women, they shoot prisoners in cold blood, they burn towns and villages, they destroy factories, they cannot even search without robbing and stealing. Redress there is none. These things happen not in some mountain fastness in Asia Minor nor in a remote corner of Africa, but in Europe, in the British Isles, within two hundred miles of London. They are no dæmon tale of our barbarous ancestors. They are committed by living men, forming a part of the civilisation of England. Does England rise up in wrath at the crimes that are done in her name? Do Englishmen denounce the Government that has so trampled on their honour, threaten it, resolve to cast it from power? With the honourable exception of Labour and of a section of the Liberal Party they do none of these things. Some are silent through indifference to anything which does not touch their petty lives. Others frankly condone these outrages and support the Government which commits them. "We will teach these Irish a lesson," say they, just as but recently many Anglo-Indians said they would teach the Punjab a lesson. The Chief Secretary for Ireland gets

up in his place in Parliament and prevaricates openly and unashamed. The Prime Minister declares that the Crown forces in Ireland "uphold the honour of the British flag,"—the *honour*, mark you. Such is the Government and such are the wealthier classes in England in this spring of 1921. Remember it is these classes which control the Government of the country.

III.

Now, the question which every Burman and Indian may well put to himself is this: "From Britain we have wrongs for redress, rights to demand, freedom to win. We live 8,000 miles away; our races, our languages, our cultures are of another world. If Britain, that is the classes which govern Britain, commits or connives at the commission of these acts on a people of similar race, language and culture, living at her very doors, what hope have we, so different and so far, of redress or even of justice?" These are evils inherent in a system of bureaucracy, much more in a foreign bureaucracy, and recent events in India amply prove the truth of this statement. *But the British in India belong to the same*

class as approve the Irish horrors. Did they not approve the Amritsar massacre and martial law in the Punjab? True, the Government of India has now accepted what is practically a vote of censure on its conduct and has agreed to compensate the relatives of the victims. But it has done this after Non-co-operation had threatened to shake the basis of its power. What virtue is there in being just when one's interests are not at stake, tolerant when one's subjects are submissive, penitent when one's life is in danger?

It comes to this, then, that you who love freedom—and who does not?—must trust in yourselves. Events demand that course. Honour approves it. Not as beggars craving for boons, not as petitioners to a biased judge, but as men and women of a great nation, with heads erect, stout of heart, hand in hand; so will you march on to victory. And let us add it is as men and women that the people of India and Burma have resolved to march on to victory. Their resort to Non-co-operation shows whither the wind blows.

CHAPTER II

THE INDIAN REVOLT

“**B**UT this, then, is a revolt! No, Sire, it is a revolution.” So in discussing the Non-co-operation movement, we can imagine a Simla Secretary repeating to the Viceroy the famous remark of the Duc de Liancourt. Far great and far reaching as will be the direct results of this movement, the Indian National Congress of September, 1920 gave the signal for something even greater—a revolution in the mind of India. It is not so much that Non-co-operation aims at complete Home Rule and to render for ever impossible another Terror of the Punjab. It is the means employed to gain these ends. To realise this, glance back for a moment on Indian history.

I

In the long years during which the British bureaucracy has dominated India, the Government has consistently maintained one attitude—command and the unflinching execution of

command—and the governed another—obedience, tempered by protests and pleadings, but always obedience. Emphatically one was the ruler and the other the ruled. Sometimes the rulers were more kindly, as under Bentinck or Ripon, sometimes harsher, as under Dalhousie or Curzon, but they always wielded a despotic sceptre. With the coming of the Indian National Congress, the subjects have gradually adopted a changed note, one with an undertone of independence. That has become more pronounced of recent years, particularly since the war. Still, even a year ago, before the Joint Committee, with two or three exceptions, the attitude of Indian witnesses was one of men pleading for justice before a higher tribunal. Now, all that is changed. In a flash, India, deceived, exploited, tortured, leaps upright.

She no longer prays, no longer pleads for justice. She demands it. "If you do not give justice, if you do not grant that Home Rule to which, both by right and by the principles on which you fought the war, I am entitled, I will force you to concede it, force you by rendering your whole government impossible. You may multiply machine-guns, tanks, aeroplanes, high

explosives, and every engine of death in which your Western civilisation glories, but yet I will defeat you. Your troops and armaments, how great soever, will avail you nought. By the silent but awful might of a united nation, I will bend and break your rule."

By this act the Indian National Congress has chosen the swiftest way to victory. It has done much more. It has transformed the outlook of every man and woman beneath the Indian sun. Henceforth they come, not as suppliants craving a boon, but as free men and women demanding their rights. They stand upon their own feet; they trust to their own strength—in a word, they are self-reliant.

II

Bureaucracy, under pressure from above, has opened a training school for self-government, but Indians will have none of it. In so doing, have they not acted wisely? As regards the sympathy and sincerity officials would bring to such a task—'*credat Judæes!*' Their past record is black against them. But the essential point is that bureaucracy teaches and has always taught docility and submission to authority, never free growth and initiative.

That not only injures the minds of the people but, so far as it goes, it unfits the pupils for self-government. You might as well call on Pussy-foot Johnson to run Bass's brewery, as ask the bureaucracy to train the people for democracy. Democracy, it has been truly said, is valuable not only for what it gives us, but because it makes us do things for ourselves, because it requires that people should think and criticise and act on their opinions. It demands patriotism, energy and courage to sacrifice for our motherland. Its key-note is self-reliance. But these are precisely the qualities that Non-Co-operation calls for from the people of India. Therefore Non-Co-operation is the best training for self-government. It is in such a school and not under the tutelage of officials that India can acquire the virtues of a true democracy. Did virile democracies like those of Rome or the United States first sit at the feet of officials? Did England? Has not England, since it fell under the shadow of a bureaucracy, lost much of its former love of freedom, of fair play and of independence? Depend upon it, the road that India has taken to self-government, if rugged and hard, will yet in the end prove the right and truest way.

Further, since the mind is not made in water-tight compartments, the qualities called forth in the present struggle will not be bounded only by the political aims. They must permeate all fields of thought, revolutionising the outlook of the people. In science, in art, in poetry, in literature, in all the manifold branches of human knowledge, must they make their influence felt. The present movement is the wind heralding the dawn of the great Renaissance when India will astonish the world by the brilliance of her intellect, and perhaps change by her teaching the destiny of mankind. Three hundred millions, educated and free, can do much.

In the ages of her past life India has assumed several Avatars. One Avatar she had under the Hindu kings, another under Asoka and the Buddhist kings, another under the Muhammadan Emperors and yet another under the British Bureaucracy. She is now about to enter the last and greatest Avatar—the Avatar of Herself.

III

Whether the plan of the Indian National Congress not to co-operate with the British Government succeeds or whether it fails, the

decision will surely abide as a land-mark in history. Hitherto Indians have advanced through meetings, resolutions and petitions, all having as their purpose or object to induce the Government to grant them an increased measure of liberty. At first humble, the Congress has step by step spoken in firmer tones and assumed a more virile attitude. But however the outward form has changed, the object has been ever the same, to persuade the powers that be. Quite otherwise this new policy. Not through the British Government but in its despite, not with it but apart as a people living and acting separately from its rulers, such is the plan of campaign. An earthquake has shaken India. Between ruler and ruled opens, a deep chasm. Ireland in her long-drawn agony of blood and tears has turned to Sinn Fein ("Ourselves Alone.") for the final conquest of her freedom. So too, despairing of redress, tired of vain words, weary of promises that vanish does India incline the same way. Henceforth, whatever be the event in this plan of Non-co-operation, India can never be the same as before. Never again will those bend the knee who have once stood erect on their own feet, or they who have

looked authority in the face cast down their eyes in humbleness. "Ourselves alone. Let us win our own way to freedom, asking leave of no man. Let us in this holy war follow our own leaders, rely on our own strength grasping hand-in-hand in brotherhood, a united nation that trusts itself and is resolved to win." Thus do Indians think, and, thus thinking, they act. Against such a spirit, oppression, whether wearing the mask of legality, as in the Rowlatt Act, or wielding the naked sword as in the Punjab, is powerless. It is a new spirit, a new soul, which possesses India. "We have argued, we have pleaded, we have implored," say the Indians, "and what has it availed us? Now we will act."

If the Indians act with resolution and in full union they must succeed. These are the two essential conditions. As Mr. Winston Churchill said in 1919, "If all India unites to send the Government to Coventry, the game is up." That is quite true. Confronted by a really united nation, a government is paralysed; it may take refuge in one subterfuge after another but in the end it must yield to the demands of the people. Is not that a wonderful fact? Does it not encourage? Does it

not bring close in view victory and the national life that will be after victory? Without bloodshed, without war, without anarchy and turmoil, the most bigoted tyrant can be forced to yield. The weapons of war are not the pistol or dagger, but more potent than they, folded arms. However mighty the armaments or numerous the soldiery, the people have got within themselves the power to conquer. The down-trodden may lift up their eyes to Heaven, and look forward to a life wherein each man shall be able to realise his own manhood. National life, national education, national self-respect, all lie within the people's grasp. Nothing can defeat the people but themselves. But they must really will these things. They must be united, resolute. All depends on that. For a short time they must forego personal comfort, and forget personal ambitions. Each one must sink his own self in the nation. He must be ready at the call of duty to make sacrifices in money, in comfort, even in person. All hinges on union and on common action. Success is sure if all feel themselves soldiers in the nation's cause, fighting for the freedom of their motherland.

In India the movement of Non-co-operation

deepens and widens. It so fills the land that none may now bind it or gainsay its power. In vain the Anglo-Indian Press flouts it, denounces it; in vain the officials frown on its leaders. They call it "Gandhism." What is "Gandhism"? It is just a very human love of independence and self-respect, the wish to grow freely from tutelage. Surely that is but natural in all men who have not been taught to be craven and the growth of whose minds has not been fettered by authority or dogma. It is the tragedy, the inevitable tragedy of British rule in India that it is based on the vice—for' vice it is—of humility. In spite of its better hopes, it has debased men by teaching them that they are unfit to judge and reason for themselves, that like little children they must hearken to the words of authority. Evil it is for children that their teachers should thrust their opinion on them and repress the natural free growth of their intellects. Modern psychology and pedagogy agree that untold harm is caused throughout life by repressions in growth. How much worse then are such restraints bad for grown-up men. Indians and Burmans are just as capable of thinking for themselves as Europeans, their brains are as

good, their good sense and intelligence not inferior. It is the opportunity they have lacked—thanks to the bureaucracy. Who has not heard of the story of Petu Pan, the boy who never grew up? Well, if the bureaucracy had its will, the manhood of India and Burma would never grow up. They would remain crouching before the Government with no will of their own, doomed ever to obey, “always in another’s power, never in their own.”

IV

The Non-co-operation movement is not named very happily. Better were it called a movement for self-growth or independence,—not necessarily independence outside the British Empire. It means that India at last realises the deadly “injury which the system of tutelage has worked and is working on her character.” She understands now how insidious is its poison and how it perverts or paralyses her whole growth. “Every living soul”, declared Peter Noyes, “is heir to an empire, and has fallen into a pit.” India is now climbing out of that pit. Domination she spurns; with tutelage she will have nought to do. Both as individuals and as a nation, Indians intend

now to work out their own salvation. Even the Government-controlled colleges they reject. "You need not complain", said an Indian editor, "if we drag boys out of such colleges which turn out only cowards". There is much truth in these words. Every government perverts the education of the young to suit its own ends. In Japan, where they wish to maintain the cult of the Mikado, they teach the children to bend in awe before their emperor. In Germany under the Kaiser they taught in like manner to reverence him and the army—especially the officers of the army. In various European countries, when the Churches had political power, they did not hesitate to implant their particular dogmas in the minds of the children at the government schools. Since in India and Burma the government desires the people to be docile, it inculcates docility in the schools. It is blind to the ill-effects of such teaching on the character of the boys. Like the ancient Greeks and Romans, officials would forbid to others that freedom and independence which they deem to be the dearest birthright of themselves. That is a common failing, begotten by selfishness or egotism. Did not Aristotle, influ-

enced by the circumstances of his time, argue that men were divided into classes, those with free and those with slave natures? We now know this to be false. We now know that men are by nature free; it is the vice of their upbringing that makes them submissive or humble or craven. If any system of government tends to produce this type, it condemns itself, for it is the bounden duty of a government to see to it that its people are bold and manly and independent. If it fails to do this, if it preaches docility and submission, it is a bad government and should make place for a better. That is what India is resolved on. Full self-government is essential for her life, and full self-government she will have. It is not a question of administration, it is a question of something ten thousand times greater, of the life and growth and freedom of soul of all Indians. Now are we face to face with one of the greatest crises in the history of mankind, and—for all who love freedom—one of the most hopeful.

CHAPTER III

THE CRISIS IN BURMA

THE Indian revolt referred to in the last chapter, is not the only instance of the failure of bureaucratic imperialism. The case of Burma affords another striking example of the evils of a government based on an arrogant and proud governing class puffed with an amount of vanity which, blindly confident in its self-sufficiency and infallibility, delight to flout public opinion. The reforms muddle in Burma also illustrates what we may call the paradox of the bureaucratic theory of the relation of the subject to the sovereign, namely, implicit and unquestioning obedience to all commands, good and bad, made in the name of government and by any of its agents, great and small.

I

After long delay and postponement ill explained, the Secretary of State has announced his decision on the Burma Constitution. He

is in favour of diarchy, but since the Simla and Rangoon Governments adhere to their scheme, he will not direct them to notify Burma, but will bring in a separate Bill. What a surprising decision! There is no question but that the Secretary of State can compel obedience. Sections 2 (2) and 33 of the Government of India Act, 1915, make that as clear as crystal. Not merely by departmental rule or old tradition is the Simla Government bound to obey; it is obliged by Statute law. Yet when it lifts up its head and bids him defiance, the Secretary of State meekly yields. He will not command. He proposes to turn its flank by an Act of Parliament. Doubtless it will obey that.

But what an example in official discipline! Here are governments which loudly proclaim the duty of the subject races to obey their behests, however contrary to the policy of the home government, however inspired by official interests. Yet these same governments openly flout their official superior. They flouted him once before, when after his pledge to give Burma a similar and analogous constitution to that of the Indian provinces, they proposed one inferior and radically different. *Quis*

custodiet ipso custodes? If these governments expect obedience, they must themselves learn to obey. They show no sign of learning that lesson. On the contrary, they set up a kind of official anarchy. They who care about "Bolshevism", who tremble at any hint of freedom, who denounce any public movement that breathes aught but a spirit of servile obedience, they are the first, when their own interests are jeopardised, to set up the Red Flag. It is they who are the true anarchists.

What course now shall the people of Burma take? Await in patience the Bill? Rest passive whilst the long months pass, in mockery of their hopes and efforts? Doubtless Burma will obtain diarchy through Act of Parliament, but will that suffice? Diarchy with rules and details left in the hands of the officials is a delusion and a snare. They will seize all power and then invite the people to "co-operate" with them to buttress up that power. We must face squarely the facts and not play at make-belief. What are the facts? On the one hand, stands the official caste which resolutely opposes and will always oppose any real self-government, which clings desperately to power and will not scruple to

use every artifice, every pretext and every subterfuge in order to postpone the grant of self-government. To what lengths officials will go in pursuit of this aim, let the letters published in the White Paper, Command 746 of 1920, bear witness. They are and have always been the implacable foes of democracy. On the other side stands the Secretary of State, nominally their ruler, but who does not rule, and will not enforce his commands. It comes to this, that in practice India and Burma are delivered over to the tender mercies of the bureaucracy.

Remedy there is and one remedy only. However righteous their cause, however urgent their claim, the people must cease to look to others for victory. They must themselves learn to conquer. India has already learnt this lesson; Non-co-operation is the result. The Punjab atrocities and above all the tacit approval of these atrocities by the official caste and the failure of the Home Government to meet out justice, these with the gross breach of faith of the Khalifat question, have torn from the heart of India all faith in British justice or British honour. Indians realise that to win freedom they must look to themselves alone.

In consequence they have created the greatest national movement that the world has ever witnessed. Long slumbering forces have been unchained, the tradition of centuries up-rooted, the lowliest begins to walk erect and to think as a man, aye, as a free man. The earth moves. India is in labour of a new birth.

II

It is for Burma now to make her choice of a new forward movement. The conditions are the same. As in India the people are resolute for freedom ; as in India the officials, blinded by interest, bar the way, flouting their nominal ruler and his declared policy. In Burma and not elsewhere must the great, if bloodless, fight be fought between freedom and despotism. When the Jews of old found that it was useless to parley with their kings and that they must rely on themselves, they raised the cry, "To your tents, O Israel!". That is now what faces Burma. The issue is there ; it cannot be evaded. Success lies in the hands of the Burmese themselves. No Government, however obstinate or arrogant, can long withstand the force of a united people, resolute to be free. It is for the Burmese so to organise, so

to unite, so to voice their claims that even the blindest reactionary will be forced to yield. They have done much in the past. The future calls for yet greater sacrifices. Let Burma accept the challenge, and rising to the height of her destiny, battle her way through all opposition to freedom.

Perhaps the deepest evil, then, of a bureaucratic government is that it sets up no duty save the duty of obedience. And not only obedience but mechanical obedience. This is the ethics of the drill sergeant. I order ; you obey. If you refuse, nay, if you but question the wisdom of my commands, it is "unrest" or "sedition" or "anarchy," as the official's mood may be. The ideal of many officials is just a people of obedient serfs, intent only on material gain ; for those who revolt against this ideal, there is the Rowlatt Act, the Press Act and all the host of repressive sections and laws. Cheering, is it not ? But the coming democracy appeals to quite another side of the human mind, the spiritual side. That is a fact which all Burmans must now firmly grasp—the total change in outlook. Democracy urges your duty to your family, to your neighbour, to your own ; it holds aloft your duty to your

country. It threatens not; it challenges. It challenges you not by base fears of harm to yourself but in spite of such harm; not for material ends but for spiritual ends; not through selfishness but through love. Democracy beckons you on and upward. It brandishes no sword of terror. But who is so base that he can be deaf to its entreaty? Where is the coward who will not come at his country's need?

III

Often as has the Government preached humility and proclaimed the baseness of the common people, the hope to realise themselves is not dead. In no man does it wholly die. For then he would be without self-respect, a brute indeed. That divine spark, the belief that, given the chance, he may become great, not even the Burma Government has been able to extinguish. Patriotism breathes on that spark, kindles it, blows it into flame. Patriotism transfigures the man. He dares—not for himself nor for any selfish ends. He begins to grow, as it were outside himself, and to live for his country. For an example, take Mahatma Gandhi who has long out-grown all petty ends, who lives but for others and the

greatness of India. That is the secret of his power—his utter selfishness and his supreme devotion to one great cause. In very despite of the officials who hate him but dare not touch him—just as the Czar's Government hated Tolstoi when it yet dared not arrest—he has arisen and stretched forth his hand over India, and lo! A NATION. Materialists sneer at him and rail against him, as they have reviled every great spiritual leader whether in Magadha or in Gallilee or in Mecca, or wherever a seer has arisen to point men to the stars. But the common folk, they hear and understand. To Burma also has come a new ideal and with it a new life. All cannot be a Gandhi, but all can gather faith from his words and take courage from his example. You must shed, as one sheds an unclean garment, all those notions of weakness, haunt and obedience, with which the bureaucracy has sought to blind your souls. You must purify yourselves of this dress as unworthy of yourselves and your nation. In place thereof, learn to think as free men, conscious of their rights and resolute to win them. Not personal reward nor from fear of personal pain must you plan and act, but because you are men, because you love your

country and intend that she shall become great. Great she can never be under alien rule, her life ordered at the will of foreigners, a servant to their commands. You desire to become a free people in the best sense of the word, a people which will see for itself, think for itself, unfettered and unafraid. Dare, then, to stand alone. Take up the burden of your country's cause. Press on with faith in her and in your own stout hearts.

IV

Before you can enter into your heritage, one obstacle, a serious obstacle, has to be removed. *Bureaucracy bars the door to freedom.* Break down that bar and the door opens. To this first object devote yourselves, your wealth, your all. It means strife and sacrifice. What then? What is life without strife and sacrifice? You are not cattle but men. Powers of the mind grow and strengthen by use just as muscles of the body. Does a wrestler become strong by dreaming of wrestling; a paddler harden himself by thoughts of the fierce contest and the foam-flecked wave?

Under the bureaucracy, the minds of some have become placid and their wills weak. But these evils can be remedied. Once touched

by the fire of the new ideals, both mind and will can, indeed, must spring into a new vigour. A million times in the world's history has this happened; it is happening now. Sounds the trumpet, the *Kayathan* of Burma. With vision to see her great future, with love for her dear self, with faith in yourselves, none may say you nay nor bound your eager, forward march.

A certain man, it is related, was for many years confined in a cell. Food and water were brought to him; but he lived always within those narrow walls. One day he opened the door and walked out, a free man. He might have opened it any time before, had he only thought of doing so.

Thus it is with all of us. In bondage we live to ideas or beliefs which confine our lives as in a prison. A little effort of will, a little courage, and we might at any time free ourselves and enter on a nobler, more spacious life. This is true not only of individuals but of nations. Take the case of India. For a century and a half, India has been a passive thrall to the power of the bureaucracy, content to have her public life ordered by aliens, to see her sons shut out from all share in the control of the state, to feel her energy, her initiative,

her self-respect wither and fade away under the blighting touch of tutelage. It never occurred to her that there was a way out. In tutelage she was, and in tutelage she was likely to remain—promises notwithstanding—until the crack of doom. Came Mahatma Gandhi and said: "Why rest in prison when thou mayest be free? Thy rulers have armed strength on their side, but there is a weapon mightier than armed strength. Hold thyself utterly aloof from the rulers; do nought to help them in the government, and all their armaments shall be as the reed that breaketh. The bars will fall from the door. Freedom will be thine." These words India has followed. The struggle is yet toward, but already great things have been achieved. But as yet the actual victories won, such as the boycott of councils or the opening of the national schools, are as nothing compared with the birth of the new spirit of independence. Spirit of independence? No, rather a new *life*. For the first time for more than a century, India *lives*.

"Millions whose lives in ice lay fast

"Have thoughts and smiles and tears."

Here is no matter of training men to administer the details of office. Ten centuries of

training under a bureaucracy could not have given this glowing spirit of freedom, which in less than a year Mahatma Gandhi has breathed into India. He has smitten the rock and it has brought forth water; he has spread his hands over the desert, and lo! a smiling garden. Whatever the results of Non-co-operation, even if it does not succeed—and there is every prospect that it will succeed—nothing can now undo this rebirth of mind, this resurrection of a nation. No material test can measure out this great event. It transcends blue books and mocks at figures. Intangible, mysterious, it is yet the greatest event in Indian history, perhaps in the history of the world. Three hundred millions open the door of their age-long prison. It is stiff, it creaks, but—it opens. The free sky shines without.

India has learnt the supreme lesson. It is this. Man grows from within. It is not eternal training or authority or drill which makes men great. Prisons rather they build which may wall us in all our lives—unless we open the door. It is the inward growth which creates saints or heroes, which touches with a living fire all that is divine in man. This too is the teaching of Buddhism. Does not the

Bodhicharyavatara declare, *Virye bodhir yata sthita nahiviryam vina punyam?* And to the same effect is the Chinese Dharmapada: "Himself, this is the first consideration. Let him put forth his own power and attain wisdom." Indeed the very kernel of Buddhism is self-growth. Herein Gauthama Buddha anticipated the grand truth which the foremost thinkers of the present day have only now begun to proclaim. Freedom too, that is the right of full self-government, the very honour of Burma demands. Shall Burma remain in tutelage when all Asia throbs with new life, when countless millions lift free foreheads to their native skies, no longer slaves but *men*. The honour of Burma, the example of India, the very teaching of Buddhism, alike call on you to rouse yourselves and act. WITHIN IS YOUR SALVATION. Not by prayers, not by petitions but *within*, by what you think, what you hope, what you dare.

CHAPTER IV

THE FAILURE OF THE BLUDGEON

JUPITER and a countryman, says a Roman fable, were conversing on all things in heaven and earth. The countryman listened agreeing much, and Jupiter strove only to convince him. But, happening to doubt, Jupiter threatened him with his thunder. "Ah," said the countryman, "now I know you are wrong. You are always wrong, Jupiter, when you appeal to your thunder."

I

That is only a fable but it contains a great truth. If one of two contending men has the use of force, appeals to that force to constrain the other to agree with him, you may be pretty certain that he is in the wrong. If he has reason or fact to prove that he is in the right, why does he not speak them forth? Why should he compel by violence or the threat of violence when he can by reason

persuade? But such acts speak not the civilised man; they are the wont and use of the barbarian. Civilisation is built on reasons. It is only the savage who uses as argument gyves or the bludgeon.

Yet during the past decade how have the Government of India and Burma dealt with the people? Have they not sought to convince them that bureaucracy is the best form of government not through argument but by force? These special laws, these additions to the I. P. C., these bonds and forfeitures and internments, what are they but bludgeon arguments? If any one says that a foreign bureaucracy is an evil government and gives reason for his belief, it is no refutation to clap him into jail. It is for the Government to prove that he is wrong, to bring forward facts and reasons, for instance, to show that the foreign bureaucracy raises the self-respect of the people, cares for their education, sacrifices its interest for theirs. If it refuses to answer the arguments, the obvious inference is that it has no answer or at least no effective answer to give.

II

Folly it is to allege that the people are

ignorant and can be led astray by "agitators." Every great reformer has been an "agitator". Gauthama Buddha was an "agitator," Jesus Christ was an "agitator," Muhammad was an "agitator." Not a great preacher or Jesuit who has lifted up the soul of mankind and has been denounced by the powers of his time as an "agitator." The more agitators we have the better. They are the very salt of the earth; from the mire of sloth, of sensuality, of ignorance, they arouse men to think for themselves; they point them to the stars.

Nor are the people ignorant as compared with the officials. Ignorant they may be of the details of administration—how to draft an official letter or fill a page with useless statistics. So the best official in the world cannot guide a plough aright or judge between two samples of paddy. But on the broad principles of government, the people have a sound judgment! Who was right as to the effect of the saltern, the officials or the people? Who was right as to the swollen Army expenditure, the officials or the people? Who was right about the massacre at Amritsar, the officials or the people? And if you will examine events in India since the people began

to criticise the Government, you will find that again and again the people have been right and the officials wrong.

What presumption, too, it is for any class of men to imagine that they alone are wise! No one holds reason captive nor owns the sceptre of the mind. Sift the facts on both sides, weigh the arguments, then only will you reach the truth. To stamp the foot and say, "I am right. Woe to him who gainsays me," is to revert to the savage or the child. We all know the egoistical child who flies into a passion and flings itself on its too critical playmate. What is the Government with its repression on opinion, its special laws against free speech, its forfeitures, its internments, but such a child? Though cowards may fear, brave men despise it. The supreme integrity of man is reason; he who dares not reason is less than man.

No doubt it is wrong to preach armed rebellion. Whoever incites to such is on a level with the tyrant who gags the mouth of the people. But every man has a right to show that the policy of a Government is evil, that it is bad in form and that the happiness and welfare of the country call for a radical change.

III

Recent events, both in India and Burma, have demonstrated that the bureaucracy desires to repress by force, *i.e.*, by the arrest and imprisonment of leading men, opinions which are distasteful to it. It has also set up "Publicity Bureaus" and, in Burma, even a newspaper, at the people's expense to make plain the purity of its motives and to prove to the people that, for them at least, freedom is bad. But if it can prove this by argument, why does it seek to put down the opposite opinion by force? Does not use of force imply that it has a bad case?

In persecuting those whose opinions it dislikes, the bureaucracy has behind it many and evil precedents. In fact it is only following in the footsteps of the Christian Churches in Europe. Christianity was at first persecuted by the Roman Emperors, and much homage has been rightly paid to the martyrs who then suffered for the faith. But for one martyr who then endured death or injury, the Churches, once they grasped political power, made a thousand. As too often happens, the persecuted became in turn the persecutors. Though Saint Augustine first popularised the

principle of religious persecution, even without him it was bound to come. For the Christians have adopted the doctrine of exclusive salvation—"without doubt they who believe not shall be damned everlastingly," as the Athanasian Creed puts it. Under the influence of this baneful and calamitous dogma, what wonder is it that the churches developed into real heresy hunters? Those who refused to believe or who doubted even some abstruse point in the orthodox creeds, they dubbed heretics, and on them they wreaked every torment which ingenuity could devise or fanaticism inspire. The Church of Rome was by far the worst offender, but every Church which attained political power—the Greek Church, the Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Calvinists—followed the same evil path. In Spain alone, 31,000 persons were burnt alive and 29,030 condemned to punishments less than death. In the Netherlands some 7,000 perished. Liberty of thought was well nigh crushed out and a night of superstition enfolded Europe.

In principle, such as were the religious persecutions of the past, were so the political persecutions in India of to-day. Just as

Christians believe that outside the Church was no salvation—*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—so do Indian officials hold that any government except bureaucracy spells damnation for India. Vast numbers of Christians of good character, many called “Saints” like Saint Augustine, justified or condoned the imprisonment and torture of heretics, exactly as officials secretly and Anglo-Indians openly justified or condoned the massacre of Amritsar and the horrors of martial law in the Punjab. The Churches consigned religious heretics to a theological hell; the bureaucracy sends political heretics to the hell of the Andamans. It seeks to stamp out political freedom of thought just as the Churches sought to stamp out religious freedom of thought. Nay, in one point it has sunk below the level of those religious fanatics, for whilst they sincerely believed that heresy destroyed the soul and spiritual nature of man, the modern Inquisitors persecute because they believe that political heresy means a lower standard of material wealth, especially for themselves.

IV

Both religious and political persecutions spring from the same evil root,—the desire to

crush by force what we cannot by argument refute. They seek equally to kill the diviner part of man and the sole surety of the upward progress—freedom of thought. They would each condemn their victims to an eternal night. But political persecution must fail even as religious persecution has failed. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," so wrote Tertullian in the days when pagan Rome oppressed the Christians. That is equally true of the heresy hunting of to-day. For one man imprisoned for his political opinions a hundred outraged in their sense of justice or inspired to action by his martyrdom, enroll themselves under the banner of freedom. In reality bureaucracy quickens what it would fain slay, and exalts the cause it hates.

In spite of its arbitrary laws and its officious police, freedom lives, grows, thunders at its fates. No persecutions can crush the cause of liberty; no sophistries dull the glow of its patriotic fire. To Burma and to India has come this holy fire. It possesses all; it inspires all; it encourages all to suffer and to do.

CHAPTER V

THE MISTAKES OF THE MODERATES

IT is sometimes supposed that the surgence of the spirit of self-reliance and the consequent movement for freedom in the East is confined to a few recalcitrant irreconcilable extremists. We hear a good deal of the Moderates in India, more indeed than their numbers warrant—and it is possible we may hear of them in Burma. Because the Indian news agencies are in the hands of Europeans and Europeans favour the Moderate Party, that Party looms larger in the eyes of Great Britain than either its numbers warrant or its importance justifies.

I

It would be strange, indeed, if, at this great time of constitutional reforms, the country were without them. As a matter of fact, no great national movement has ever yet lacked its Moderate Party. Is it not natural then that

India should have one? In times of crises, when the cause of freedom tears men's minds from their traditional moorings, when they advance into uncharted seas, facing dangers before unknown, there will always be those who hang back. Some do so on a reasoned conviction fearing too violent a break with the past; others from mere conservatism or timidity. The latter hope but will not dare. The former intend that their country should advance to freedom but they wish to advance in friendly co-operation with the powers that be, that is, in India, with the bureaucracy.

The Moderates, then, represent a type of thought that is found in all countries and in every epoch. Whenever a decisive break is to be made with the past, a bold step forward taken and risks to be faced, there will always be men who counsel moderation. Some hang back on grounds of reasoned argument; more from supineness or timidity. They play for safety, for themselves, certainly, for their country, as they believe. But they are always ready to occupy the ground won by the braver spirits—after it is won. “Do not”, they urge, “irritate the powers that be. Let us address them reasonably and advance in co-operation

with them. So will our progress be at once smooth and as quick as circumstances allow."

II

But has a bureaucracy ever given up power willingly? Have not officials always clutched to the end at the garment of authority, nor yielded it until torn from their grasp? Such a government may utter fair words, it may outwardly sympathise with the popular party or at least with the Moderate section of it, but when it comes to the actual handing over of power—ah! then it will find a hundred excuses, a hundred reasons for delay. Never, except under duress will it give up power,—real power. In brief, it gives when it must; it holds when it can.

Now it is just here that the Moderates make their first mistake. If words were acts, if professions of sympathy heralded deeds of sympathy, if, in short, the Government of India showed a genuine desire to strip itself of its powers and to hand them over to the people, why, then, the Moderates were sound statesmen! But what are the facts? See how that Government dealt with the Morley—Minto reforms. See how it attempted to alter Montagu

proposals. Look at all it has done when not bound by pressure from England or put in fear by events in India. Is there a single act which witnesses a sincere intent to reform or a real zeal for popular liberty? Is the Government which condoned the Punjab atrocities, which by arbitrary orders suppressed the knowledge of them, which conferred impunity on their perpetrators thus becoming an accessory after the fact—is this a Government from whose hands India can expect freedom? It is childish to play at make-believe. Only those who can say *Credo quia impossibile* will build on Simla as an agent for reform.

Besides, it were ingenuous to imagine that the bureaucracy should of its own will grant political freedom. Officials believe that they alone have the brains and strength and experience requisite to govern India—they quite honestly believe this. It is the pole-star of their policy. Would you have them desert their convictions and do what they hold to be morally wrong? Not hand-in-hand with Simla, but by assault on Simla, must India win freedom. The Montagu reforms have made a breach in the walls of Simla, but it is not what soldiers call a practicable breach. The National Congress and the

Moslem League will bombard it until it is practicable. The Moderates would call a truce and parley with the garrison. But if they think they will gain aught thereby but fair words, they live in a land of dreams—of dreams which do not come true. Indeed officials quite honestly believe that none but themselves can rightly wield authority. Why then expect them to do what they honestly think wrong? Those are their views and we must act accordingly. It is childish to play at make-believe. Moderate methods then can win nothing worth having. They may secure some petty reform, some circumscribed concession that gives the form whilst withholding the substance. But the great measures which win forward to political liberty are beyond, and will always be beyond, their reach. A nation that entrusts its destiny into their hands will find itself with ashes for bread and the chain of servitude yet clanking on its body.

III

If the Moderates fail with the powers that be, they fail yet more lamentably with the people whose cause they claim to represent. In every community there is always much lethargy,

much timidity, much inertia. Men love the easy habit of routine ; they dread change, even change for the better. If you wish to move them, you must hold out before their eyes an object that is worth winning. Petty reforms fail to interest. You must appeal to their emotions ; you must point them to high ideals, ideals that will inspire them to take off easy servitude and to quit themselves like men. Are technicalities likely to thrill their hearts ? Will they be moved to act by small changes in the rules of the legislature ? No. It is ideas such as national progress, national pride, national honour which quicken the souls of men and spur them forward to great deeds. It is by appeals to the noble and the generous in their hearts that you move them to high endeavour. Here again the Moderates are tried and found wanting. To inspire men you must hold up before their eyes some noble object, such as the banner of a self-governing, self-respecting people. You must appeal to their emotions and this no technical or partial reforms will ever do. In each man lives the God but He wakes only to the trump of some great cause. Take, for instance, the speech of Mohammed Ali at the Amritsar Congress. That speech with its fire

and eloquence will count more in the salvation of India than ten thousand utterances of sincere but guarded Moderates. The Moderates may convince men but they do not move men to act. And that is where the Moderates fail, and have always failed.

Even in their manner of accepting what others have secured, the Moderates often show a want of self-respect. For they look on reforms not as rights received, but as boons conferred. Humbly, on bended knees, they return thanks.

Is that consistent with their personal dignity? Is it consistent with the national pride? Is it in accordance with modern ideas? To-day the old notion of the right of conquest—the right, as Dean Swift 'put it, of the grenadier to take the property of the naked man—this notion is beginning to wear a little thin. It is even stigmatised as barbarous. All civilised nations have accepted the doctrine of self-determination. A nation that has seized land, not belonging to it, has now one paramount duty, namely, with the utmost zeal and urgency to fit the people of those lands for self-government, and the moment they are in any way fit, to hand 'over the government to

them. No cant, no hypocrisies, no delays. That is what the United States did in Cuba and the Phillipines and that is the duty of the British Government in India and in Burma. Anything less would sully the name of England, England the mother of free parliaments that through the dark ages upheld the torch of liberty. Hence it is as freemen receiving back their rights, not as suppliants obtaining a boon, that they should welcome the reforms which the Secretary of State has promised them. It is no longer a question of lord and vassal; it is a question of the birth-right of civilised men. And it is not consistent with self-respect to receive the grant—the overdue and partial grant—of liberty otherwise than with the calm dignity of a nation?

IV

The term “Moderates,” then, denotes those who believe in the officials and are ready to co-operate with them towards Home Rule. In Burma they are few in number. But since it will always be the aim of the officials to detach as many persons as possible from the Nationalists and rally them to their side, it is necessary to repeat the reasons why this belief is false.

(I) *The officials are foes to freedom.* You must estimate a man's future conduct by what he has done in the past. In Burma, the officials shut out the Morley-Minto reforms; they made the Legislature practically a branch of the Secretariat; District Councils the "most unduly delayed"; municipalities were ruled by them and not by the citizens. In every way Burma was kept in leading strings. When the Montagu reforms were brought in, the Local Government again endeavoured to shut Burma out. It first sought to establish merely an Advisory Council. Then it put forward two schemes, the latter accepted by the Simla Government, which gave no responsibility and therefore no training, and which kept all real power tightly in the hands of the officials. In support of these proposals, it showed an animus and made allegations only consistent with intense hostility to all popular power. It has now yielded to diarchy merely because it considered that further delay would be dangerous. It has attacked the Nationalist Press, it has attacked prominent Nationalists. How can you expect that officials, with this record, this moderation, will help you on to freedom? Is it not certain that, as in the past, they will

obstruct, delay, combat every step forward to democracy.

(2) *The officials cannot and will not teach you democracy.* Democracy, that is government by the people, aims at self-growth and is based on trust in the people. The whole record of the officials proves that they mistrust and fear the people. They have spent your revenues on a swollen army and police force,—for what reason? Is it to protect themselves from the people? Serious outside enemies there are none. Your education they have neglected, and the little they have doled out has been tainted by a slave mentality. Their excise policy has shown greater respect for revenue than for the temperance of the people. The key note of bureaucracy has been and is drill and discipline and obedience at the bayonet's points. Freedom of thought it has tried to crush. Patriotism is banned. All this has to be reversed. In place of external discipline, you have to encourage self-growth, self-expression and self-respect. You have to inspire the people to think for themselves, to work out their own problems, none making them afraid. Schools and a patriotic education must be the very apple of your eye. In place

of the people being the servants, they will become the masters and the government the instrument for carrying out their will. Can the bureaucracy teach you how to govern in this new world? No one doubts the honesty of the officials, but their ideals differ from yours, as much as Lord Sydenham from Col. Wedgwood. The *administrative* machine, the maintenance of law and order and the thousand and one details of official life will go on as before. But the principles, and the policy of government will be totally reversed.

(3) *It is unworthy of you to pray for boons.* What, you, the descendants of a race which for centuries had been independent, which had extended its sway and its culture over the whole valley of the Irrawaddy, which at one time spoke face to face with the Viceroy of India, have you sunk so low that you must petition for favours on your bended knees? Have you no pride, no self-respect? Do you not understand that self-government is your plain right? It is the right of every civilised people to govern themselves. Not only is that right founded on justice and humanity, but it was laid down by President Wilson in his Fourteen Points and explicitly

accepted by the British Government. Hold yourselves erect. Think of yourselves not as a race of humble petitioners but as free nations ready and determined to take your place in the comity of nations.

(4) *Foreign rule degrades.* Neither high professions nor kindly words, nor material wealth, nor show of outward order can in any way atone for the moral injury it inflicts. It degrades by barring you from the conduct of your own government. It humiliates by holding you inferiors in your own country. It saps your energies, vitiates your morality, tears your self-respect to tatters. That is true not only in Burma and India, but in every civilised country where one race—or, for the matter of that, one class—has lorded it over another. Every day the bureaucracy rules, continues and deepens this degradation.

A race which has conquered another by force of arms always alleges, to stifle the stirrings of conscience, that the conquered are unfit to govern themselves. Do not be deceived by such sophistries. Doubtless, it requires some courage, after being taught humility for generations, to rise up and think as free men. What then? Have you not courage, have you not

confidence in yourselves, have you not faith in your dear motherland? You are men. Think and act then as men, and you will surely win that freedom which, in common with your fellow countrymen, you at heart desire.

V

Statesmen, both in Parliament and elsewhere, have, I know, exhorted Indians to co-operate with the officials in the reformed councils in order to make them a success. Let Indians and officials work together in harmony; let them unite for the common good of the country. That sounds plausible, even patriotic. But in practice what does this co-operation mean? England has given it a full trial and a fair test. Were not all parties invited, nay, implored to co-operate with the Government during the war that we might better withstand Germany and her allies? After that Government had ended the German war and were about to embark on the Russian, Irish and Mesopotamian wars—not to mention lesser affairs like the Egyptian and Punjab wars—was not every patriotic citizen again urged to co-operate? What have been the results? *Si monumentum requiris circumspice*. Everywhere the results

of co-operation stare you in the face. You can see them in a dictator Premier, a puppet Parliament and *political* Opposition. Abroad you may see them in national crime, national dishonour, in bloodshed and in famine ; at home in incredible blunders and in a taxation beyond men's power to bear. Most ominous of all, in place of a Parliament that has ceased to be respected or trusted, is the uprise a of Council of Action. Co-operation, in short, bids fair to ruin Parliament and to prepare the way for Revolution. The results had been less disastrous had the times been not times of crises. But in any case co-operation is bound to work evil. For good government you must have in opposition to the party in power a responsible party which will criticise, exhort, and denounce. Place men in uncontrolled power and you make them as gods. No men are good enough to be gods. Whether elected by a popular franchise or by an oligarchy makes no difference ; they become tyrants with all the faults of tyrants. Nor are the consequences less evil for the weaker that co-operates with the dominant party or government. As it was with the Liberal Unionists so will it be with the Coalition Liberals. If you co-operate with a

more powerful party, you become its henchmen, you forsake your principles, you desert your battle-cry and your cause, politically you die.

Is it likely that this co-operation which has well nigh wrought the ruin of England will bring to India salvation? For India, like England, the times are perilous. She is about to quit the old ways on which she has stood so long and to march upward to higher ground. She will soon enter parliamentary life, truncated, limited if you will, but still parliamentary life. It is a crisis in her national existence. Who are the two parties who are invited to co-operate in this crisis? On the one hand, the officials clinging to power by tradition, autocrats disliking democracy, mistrusting Indians and resting ultimately on the soldier. On the other, the Indians, democrats, patriots, eager for full self-government and deriving their power from the people. Under the new constitution the former are the more powerful—they hold the winning cards. What conceivable principle have these two parties in common? You might as well expect Lord Curzon and Mr. Smillie to sit down to work together as parties with such different angles of vision. Where one sees good the other sees evil. What

one hails as a new heaven other will denounce as destruction and the end of all things.

VI

If the Moderates, beguiled by the official piping, seek to co-operate with them, their end will be even as the end of the Liberal Unionists and the Coalition Liberals. On the Moderates as the weaker party the officials will impose their will. For a time, they may enjoy the loaves and fishes of office—we had a foretaste of this in the Rules Committee. For a time they may loom large in the public eye and pose as patriots. But like flies caught in the spider's web, every move will find them deeper enmeshed in the official net and committed to official views. On the day when Indians come into real power, their places will know them no more.

Why play at make-believe? Fear and trust, class-rule and democracy, the foreign sword and Indian patriotism, never have and never will join hands. These are the forces that in India face each other. Under one flag or the other, Indians must enlist. Which is it to be? The choice has to be made, and made now. No casuistry, no pompous phrases, no vague sentiments can hide the essential difference of principle.

CHAPTER VI

THE FETTERS ON FREEDOM

THE new movement in the East, which was the subject of the preceding chapters, is based on a better understanding of human nature than generally obtains. It is no bad plan, if, as humanists, we would prove the possibilities of human nature, to look at some period when great men abounded and try to ascertain the reasons why they were so numerous. Such a period was the classical age of Greece. The time when Greek thought was at its zenith extends, roughly, from before 600 B. C. till about the time of Alexander, say some three centuries. The population during that time probably averaged only a quarter of a million free men in the Peloponnesus—the slaves did not count. Athens itself was only half as large as Hastings. Yet little Greece—little only in numbers—brought forth in that space artists, writers and philosophers who have set the standard to all the dim succeeding

centuries. Why was this? These Greeks were the same as other men; they had the same blood, flesh, nerves, eyes and ears. Why did they thus excel in mind and reign as kings in the realm of thought?

I

Recent inquiries have sought to solve this problem, not without success. The outstanding marks of the Greek intellect were its clearness or directness of vision, its courage and its freedom. Take first its clearness and courage. In one respect the Greeks had an advantage over us, though some may not deem it an advantage. They started with blank sheet. They were free from the glosses of the schoolman and the affections of the "litterateur." They saw for themselves. "The dead govern the living," said Comte, and in no respect is this truer than in how we think. From this incubus the Greeks were free. Behind them lay barbarism, before them all the fresh and glorious land of human thought. They were like men in a newly discovered country, eager, frank and unconfined. If, at this period, they had no universities to act as centres of learning, they had also no universities to stifle their minds

with sophistries and befog the clearness of their vision by graceful, glittering but unreal verbiage. With frank and curious eyes they looked on this human world ; what they saw, that they said, not concealing its ugliness nor blind to its harshness, yet rejoicing in its beauties—glorying in life.

In this directness of thought some may find a parallel between the Labour Party of to-day and these old Greeks. Whether we agree or disagree with their views, it is impossible not to be struck, whether in Parliament or on the platform or in the Press, by the clearness of diction with which these men from the mines or the factory express themselves. It contrasts sharply with that “wooly” way of thinking, as Mr. Quiller-Couch aptly terms it, so common amongst the cultured classes and particularly with officials. That has happened not once or twice only in our history. With these men who work with their hands there is no art for art’s sake. They are more Greek than many Greek scholars.

II

Turn now to the freedom of the Greeks. Freedom implies absence of restraint. What has restrained succeeding generations from

thinking freely? Two of the causes are written large across the face of history: they are political despotisms on the one hand, and on the other the great organised religions. At the present moment, the Catholic Church with its ban on "heretical" books is a good example of the one, whilst political hindrances are exemplified by the Bolsheviks' rule in Russia and the British Government in India, with its Rowlatt and Press Acts. But there is no country in Europe the annals of which do not teem with religious and political edicts stifling freedom of speech. With shouts of "heresy" or "sedition," authority has herded mankind back from the light. Now, though there were instances to the contrary—that of Socrates, for example—the Greeks were on the whole but little hampered by their governments in thinking or speaking. They were, in fact, quite as free as the English or Americans before the war. If, too, their religion taught many quaint, even immoral, stories, if it held up no great ideal before their eyes, it had this advantage: that in common with other polytheistic cults, it was very tolerant. It had, too, no Book. Where there are many gods there is no room for a jealous God, and there will

be but few religious persecutions. The Romans, it is true, persecuted the early Christians, but they persecuted them because they considered that Christianity would undermine the State, which in fact it did, being for good or ill, one of the causes of its downfall. Indeed, the bonds of his religion sat lightly on the old Greek; he criticised his gods much as he criticised the world. He was very far from being obsessed by them. On the contrary, he was a humanist and looked on life as a humanist, much as modern men begin to do. But he went free from many shadows that still darken our eyesight. Ghosts still rule us and we worship tombs.

But there is a third fetter to freedom of thought which the labour of recent psychologists has brought to light—herd instinct or herd suggestion. It depends on the biological fact that man is a gregarious animal, inheriting all the advantages but also the limitations of the gregarious animal. Thus he is very sensitive to the opinion of the herd, ill at ease when separated from it, deaf to experience which belies the herd tradition, readily led provided the leader is but little ahead of the herd or voices its opinion hostile at heart to other

herds and uninfluenced by their tradition. Though the fetters of despotism and religion tend to crumble away, that of the herd has been enormously strengthened in these latter days by ease of communication, by the agglomeration into large cities and by the newspaper press. If, owing to its root in human nature, herd tradition is not felt as irksome, or by many is not felt at all, it is none the less real for all that. Silken cords can bind as tightly as iron chains. Many a man who would scorn to bow the knee to a despot, who heard unafraid the menace of the priest, is a helpless slave to the traditions, be they never too absurd or unjust, of his community. From this evil the Greeks were singularly free. They had no Press; no large towns, no railways, nor indeed good communications in our sense of the term. They spoke, they criticised, they praised or blamed very much as each thought fit. To a remarkable extent the individual could express his own views and think his own thoughts. The tradition of man's particular community always has prejudiced him and probably always will prejudice him, but this prejudice affected the Greeks less probably than any other known people.

From the example of the Greeks who, the same flesh and blood as other men, so far excelled all others, we may perceive how potent are these fetters that have hitherto shackled climbing humanity. They may be called the Fetter of the King, the Fetter of the Priest, and the Fetter of the Herd. To rise to Greek greatness, mankind, and not merely isolated individuals, must win freedom from these Bonds. From the last he may never wholly clear himself—perhaps it is well that he should not do so—yet in modern life it is the most formidable barrier to progress. It avails little if, after shaking off the tyranny of depots and of hierarchies, we sink helpless under that of the crowd.

III

What of our Press? Psychologically, in the war-mind, it is the sub-conscious that rules. The reasoning, critical powers are dethroned. And it is the inveterate habit of the sub-conscious to suppress unpleasant facts or ideas. Hence the concealment of all events which might tell against the aims of the Government, not only during the war, but in that artificial continuance of war conditions—especially the

“fog of war”—for which Messrs. Lloyd George and Milner are responsible. We no longer talk of arguments to be met, but of propaganda to be put down. Nor are the foremost newspapers and news agencies one whit behind the Government in the landslide of the mind. To suit imperialistic views they suppress an Amritsar massacre, or comouflage a burning of Cork or even invent an alarmist speech like that fathered by Reuter on the Indian Commander-in-Chief. This is true not only of events within the Empire but also of the doings of our Allies.

Take Japan, that Japan which has so loyally seconded Mr. George in the German reparation “stunt.” Though the Government did not trouble to cover the naked robbery of Shantung with even the fig-leaf of a mandate, nothing could have been more delicate and discreet than the comments thereon in the British Press. In America they understand this matter better. But then America has in Japan no ally but a very probable foe. If there were no missionaries in Korea, is it likely we should know of the “reprisals” committed by Japan in this Ireland of the East? We hear how the Japanese Government has quelled

social disturbances; we do not hear the causes or the intent of the trouble. That is typical of the newspaper attitude. If a country is our Ally, we are told that the Government has restored order or "has the situation well in hand"; if it is not, the papers relate the outbreak of rebellions. In Russia under the Tzar, our telegrams told of the suppression of "anarchist" conspiracies—somewhat briefly, for, the details made bad reading. With the Soviet Government, the Press overstates the few real rebellions; it has conjured up hordes of imaginary ones; a dozen times it has been Red, when our real Reds saw only White, peace.

When the Bulgarians wreaked their will on the Serbians, their atrocities were duly published forth, but a veil is drawn over the like iniquities of the Serbians in Albania. The seizure by Italy before the war of Tripoli, and, after it, of the German Tyrol, have been passed over in that silence which gives consent. As for France, she is as a mistress in whom her lover will see no smallest blemish. This folly began with Morocco and the Entente and has since grown apace. Her conscription of African negroes, her robbery of Syria—where, as in

Mesopotamia, "rebellions" are suppressed—her sinister intrigues in Poland, the evil she has wrought in Hungary and in Germany, especially the quartering of savages on a defenceless countryside—all these crimes the Press has combined to conceal or to belittle or to palliate. And so it is with the countless lesser happenings which go to make up the political life of the peoples. We see the doings of our Allies as in a mirage which changes our desert sand to water and harsh rocks into living cases.

After all, is this surprising? Capital owns the Press, and Capital is concerned with money interests only. What has it to do with questions of principle, of freedom, and of justice? These ideas, like the League of Nations, have their use as a smoke-screen to hide the real manoeuvres but, if they stand in the way of the interests of the nation—that is, of big business—trample them under foot. As with ourselves, so with our Allies. There is honour among thieves. Apart from our Labour papers and a few others, the entire Press is at one in beguiling its readers into a dream-world of suppressed or disguised facts. But the real world is very different. The real world does not consist of

two sets of people, one labelled Allies and painted white and the other labelled Enemies and painted black. It consists of human beings like ourselves, who, under whatever flag, are touched by generosity, angered at injustice, and quickened through ideals.

IV

Is there not something wrong, too, with our education? Does it not too often, instead of leading on the nations to wider horizons, tend rather to foster national egotism, to rationalise prejudice and to turn minds unduly to the past? We march forward through the years; forward should be our gaze. And when we read the writings of former days, we should study them, not with an eye to grammatical verities or the comments of the scholiast, but to understand and to be inspired by the great thoughts of great men. It is not sufficient only to instruct. Education must inspire. And with inspiration must come the opportunity to make good. "Every soldier carries a field-marshal's baton in his knapsack," said Napoleon. That is as true in the kingdom of the mind as in the realm of arms. If it be only realised—what is the actual fact—that, "given

inspiration and opportunity," the meanest plough-boy may become a Lincoln or a Burns, the veriest drab a Sappho or a Hypatia, how black the crime against humanity of any system, political, religious or educational, that binds down into the dust the divine spirit of humanity? The pity of it all! Let us then fight and help forward to the utmost of our power any movement, under whatever flag, that helps man to realise the god within him, stifled, overlaid and bound, but within him. And as Greek thought decayed with the loss after Alexander of the old free city life, so we may learn to cherish freedom not only amongst ourselves, but in our brother nations, and account him not glorious but accursed who takes that freedom from them. Across the dark centuries comes to us the call of the Greek humanists: "Be free, be free, as peoples, as citizens, and above all in mind. Dare to see, dare to think, dare to reason for yourselves."

CHAPTER VII

THE GOSPEL OF BUDDHA

THE conclusion arrived at in the last chapter is not opposed to the teachings of the master minds of the East. Nor is the ferment in the East one purely political. To-day, it is true India and Burma are intent, passionately intent, on the struggle for political and personal freedom. But soon, when that struggle is over, when the victory is won, a great renaissance of thought will illumine these lands and an outburst of energy quicken their peoples. Then will their cultures, based on ancient religions, greatly expand, and, expanding, may influence the civilisation of the world.

I

For us in the West, and for Positivists especially, Buddhism has special features of interest, for no religion is so nearly akin to the teachings of Auguste Comte. Each religion—using that term in its proper sense—

renounces the idea of a God; each religion appeals, not to authority, but to reason; each religion teaches that in devotion to others lies true happiness. In his conversation with Anathapandika, Gautama argued definitely that a God does not exist, and there are several other Buddhist Scriptures to the same effect. Neither Buddhism nor Positivism would base morality on the commands of another Being, nor on sanctions for the breach of such commands. In its original and primitive form Buddhism knew nothing of a heaven or hell. True, large numbers of Buddhists now believe in these external aids to earthly morality, and the Chinese and Tibetans in particular have devised fantastic schemes of future punishment. But these are later accretions, which find no place in the actual words of Gauthama. Positivism, as we all know, is based on scientific reasoning. So too does Buddhism lay stress on reasoning, on knowledge, on an appeal to the facts. What a contrast to other great religions which have denounced inquiry and freedom of thought, preaching submission of mind to dogma! Small wonder that Buddhists have not wrought evil on followers of other faiths by the sword or stake or rack. For such

they have felt not hatred, but compassion as for people ignorant of the law.

II

Comte urged that higher progress and human happiness depended on the substitution of social feeling for self-love. He preached a supreme devotion to Humanity. Buddhism inculcates the same doctrine as to happiness, but it attacks the problem from a different side. Gauthama taught that all sorrow is due to *Trishna*, the grasping desire for self-gratification, whether in this world or another, and that true happiness, therefore, is only to be won by the extinction of this craving through following the Noble Eightfold Path. "Stateless are desires," he said, "full of suffering, full of despair, altogether wicked." To win this freedom from self, *dhyana*, that is, meditation designed for mental discipline, is especially recommended. It is akin to the Hindu *yoga*, but different from it. Thus he used the natural desire for happiness as a weapon to kill *selfishness and greed and hatred*. *Through self Buddhism destroys self*. This, too, is what Mr. Gandhi means in saying that for the individual *Swarajya* or self-government, is *moksha*, or salvation (rather,

emancipation.) Certain it is that the Burmese, who follow most closely the teachings of Gautama, are kindly and tolerant to others, and singularly happy in themselves.

Obviously this doctrine of self-conquest and self-culture, when followed, must profoundly affect human nature and, through it, civilisation. Take, for example, such a vital matter as eating. To one who has lived amongst Buddhists or Hindus, Western society seems given up to gluttony and smitten with diseases, the fruits of gluttony. Large sections seem to live literally to eat *i.e.*, eating forms their chief pleasure in life. Buddhism cuts at the root of this materialism. It is true that Gautama renounced asceticism, but he was content with one meal a day, which hardly tallies with modern Western ideas. It is difficult to see how gluttony, with its subtle urge to materialism, can be subdued save by some such doctrine as this. So too with drunkenness and sensuality.

In this doctrine of selflessness, Buddhism is in sharp contrast with Christianity, with its personal God, personal soul, and personal salvation. The supreme happiness known as *Nirvana* is obtained only when all thought

of self has been obliterated. Christianity, on the other hand—which has no particular connection with the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ—preaches self, insists on self, both here and beyond the grave. To these doctrines is due in no small measure the exaggerated egoism with its greed, its lust, and its materialism which to-day dominates Europe. If the supreme tragedy of the war was primarily due to secret diplomacy and commercial greed, its deeper causes must be sought in a morbid individualism and the death of human co-operation, for both of which Protestant Christianity is largely responsible. Under the Catholic Church there is little individualism, but then too there is no freedom of the 'intellect. It has escaped Scylla only to fall into Charybdis. Though Buddhism, both in theory and in practice, gives full scope for freedom, political and individual, and for the civic virtues, it must be admitted that this aspect of human life is not greatly stressed in its doctrines. It is to man as the individual rather than to man as a citizen that it looks. Herein Comte, with his deep knowledge of the Modern world, and his sense of duty to our fellow men, has the surer touch. But he does not seem to have

emphasised the cardinal importance of freedom for the health and progress of human society.

What of to-morrow? The skies are dark and in them loom the shadows of titan forces. If the struggle, now toward, and for which the War was but a prelude, be between the spirit of Self and the Spirit of Brotherhood, then may the doctrines taught by Gautama Buddha, 2,500 years ago, again shine forth and again give comfort and help to perplexed humanity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CALL OF CULTURE

THAT freedom which we have discussed in the last chapter is both the goal and the call of culture. Man has no harder task than to think free from the social surroundings in which he happens to live. He sees himself and the material world, not clearly, but through the distorting glass of the prejudices, the traditions, even the facts, of his community. Great minds, stars of the first magnitude, have been thus betrayed, and, whilst seeking the Absolute, have merely built up systems, based on the ideas of their time. Take, for example, such political writers as Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu and Machiavelli. Each of these thinkers believed himself to be laying down principles fundamentally true in the government of men, but each is plainly biassed by the ideas and events of his period. Thus, Machiavelli was swayed by Cæsar Borgia and the turbulent stolen principalities, Montesquieu by

the particular phase of the English constitution then dominant, Locke by the Revolution of 1688, Hobbes by the stirring times of Charles I. That is not to say but that many profound truths and deep thought will be found in these great masters. Of the Italian, it may be truly said that he who would understand the government of men must first wrestle with Machiavelli at the gate. But to weigh them aright, the student must bear in mind the history of their times, how men then thought, and how they ruled. True is this also of other philosophers, such as Rousseau and Tolstoy, Hegel and Spencer.

I

If then kings in the realm of thought have been misled into accepting as true and universal the accidents of their time and place, how can we, stragglers under a darkening sky, hope to see through the mist of our prejudices? We tend to accept as the best possible the society in which we were born. Those born under a monarchy, believe a monarchy to be the natural order of government; those under a republic, a republic; many of those under a bureaucracy, a bureaucracy. Will mankind ever win through

to utter clarity of thought? It seems doubtful. But though that goal may be for ever beyond our reach, we can make a stout effort towards it. We need not lie supine slaves to our environment. We can study, think, observe. One good method there is, the basis indeed of the science of anthropology, namely, the method of comparison. Note the customs and beliefs in former times and in other countries, and compare them with those around us. Historical novels in particular are useful, since they paint in vivid colours the life of other times and show how men then living thought of events which to us are merely deeds of long ago. By them we can understand how ideas, now deemed absurd or wicked, were blindly received as right, and how others now commonplaces, were, when first mooted, violently denounced and their advocates maltreated. By this method too we can compare with our country other countries, especially those most peaceful and advanced, and take note from them of ideas or principles worthy of adoption amongst ourselves. For instance, in England, with its feudal past of kings, barons, squires and serfs, the cultured classes, or many of them believe to this day that the

labourers are naturally inferior to them in mental ability. Books were written and many speeches delivered, especially before the days of compulsory education, arguing that it was a waste of time and money to educate the poor. The same notions are, or were until quite recently, current in many parts of Europe. Even a Greek thinker like Aristotle held that there is a slave nature as well as a free nature, and that slaves are by nature inferior to free men. Now in the United States where there is greater equality of opportunity than in England, where ghosts of dead lords and kings do not drop poison into the ears of living men, the great majority hold that poor and rich do not differ *at birth*. It is the different surroundings that mould the one into cultured gentlemen, the other, may be, into a wastrel or dolt. This is what Godwin and other thinkers taught a century ago, and it is true. The example of America and of other lands, where men start on fair terms, proves it. It may bring hope and inspiration and courage to many a weary toiler.

That is only one example amongst many of how the tyranny of the herd pinions our wings when we would fly. The schools alas !

and colleges, which should emancipate, often bind but faster their pupils. They are taught to accept, as founded on the granite, hollow dogmas or outworn dreams. So far from being taught to work out their own salvation, to think for themselves, the effect is to check their minds from growing and to mould them in rigid positions, just as in old-fashioned gardens we see shrubs clipped into fanatic shapes. Emerging from the college, with perhaps some rags of ideals still clinging to him, youth, educated but not inspired, falls an easy victim to the Capitalist Press with its externalism and sensations. On that level 99 out of 100 pass the rest of their lives. Materially, Western civilisation is brilliant. Intellectually it is a hundred volt light working at one volt pressure.

II

From this evil of a Press, run in the interests of "big business", Indians as yet are free. But do they not suffer an even deeper hurt in the sway of an alien bureaucracy? All bureaucracies hate criticism and are foes to free thought, but especially a foreign bureaucracy. Interlopers in the country obey rule,

the officials guard the fabric of their power with the alertness of watch-dogs. They are up in arms not only against any who upbraid themselves but, what is far worse, against those who love their motherland. Patriotism, the chiefest virtue in Briton, is in Indians imputed a crime. Is not that the graver wrong, the deadlier injury? For, in happier lands, patriotism is the stimulus to effort, the guerdon of toil, the bond of mutual help. It has fired men to do the impossible, and they have done it. It has inspired great songs and prose that is eternal. It lifts men out of themselves and teaches them to greet death with a smile. All that, bureaucracy would forbid to Indians. But, as I have stated elsewhere, fortunately, as when men strive to blow out a fire but thereby only kindle it to fiercer flame, the efforts to quench Indian patriotism have ended in fortifying it and in establishing it in the remotest village. Lord Curzon may yet receive a statue as the founder of United India, whilst Sir R. Craddock has rendered yeoman's service in Burma.

III

The evil then that the bureaucracy sought to do by its war on Indian patriotism has

turned to good and brought nearer the day of a free constitution. The hammers that would rivet fresh chains on the slave have smitten his bonds as under. What, then, if to Indian thought the bureaucracy has played the part of a harsh step-mother? What if it has chidden where it should have praised, bound where it should have loosed, whipped where it should have held out prizes of gold? In spite of all, Indians have learnt to think and to speak in public affairs with an insight second to no other people, with a breadth of view which heralds great things when the country shall be free. Tried in the fire of persecution, they have shown the stuff that is in them. Now is the time of struggle, now when the faint light of freedom gleams on doubtful skies and the full dawn delays. For India's sake it behoves each Indian not only to think but to act for himself. It needs a stout heart to face the frowns, or worse, of the bureaucracy, but who will shrink back when his motherland cries for help? It requires imagination and vision to shake off the poison of slave morality which that Government has always preached, to think boldly as a free man. But only so can Indians render due service to their country and enter on their birthright as civilised and

educated men. Away from this morass of convention, darkened by the shadow of a despotic government, gleams the fair land of noble thought and high endeavour in the service of mankind. Between lie rugged mountains, with deserts hard to pass. But many a pioneer has already gone to that land. They beckon all Indians to follow. It is the time to go, to join the advancing army. Who hangs back ?

After all, should not true hearts rejoice and be glad that they are living under skies of storm when the freedom of millions trembles in the balance ? In sunny times, the worthiest may drowse away their lives and pass to their end, unmarked and untried. In their ears has sounded no trumpet call ; they are not roused ; they do their duty, but they do it in the humdrum way of convention. But now, when India struggles to be free, it is in the power of each man of courage and vision to achieve something great for his country. To him comes a chance not vouchsafed in centuries of sleepy peace. The thunder of battle is in the air, and the arrays are set. India sounds the call to war, the holy war for freedom. For each Indian, it is not

merely a duty, it is a *privilege* to help. He must act and now.

IV

Acts, it has been truly said, are the children of thought. How, then, may one prove a new idea, whether it be good or evil? Two grand tests there are in the art of government. Does it help to freedom? Does it help to justice? Each man or woman is born with the right to freedom both as an individual—to think and speak his own thought—and as a citizen—to choose the government he or she considers best. Each is also born with the right to justice, which implies not merely justice in and before the law, but equal opportunities in life. In human society, that last ideal may now seem afar off. But free and compulsory education is a big step towards it, and in any case one ought to strive towards the high goal, even though it be now out of reach. “Let us hitch our wagon to a star.” In politics, these are in truth the grand guides, following which none need go far astray.

Some may object, “We have not had the advantage of a University education, or even in the higher classes of schools. How then may we think for ourselves? The answer is that though such education may be useful, it

is certainly not essential for men who think clearly and well. Did Rousseau have it, or Abraham Lincoln, or Burns, Bright or Cobden, Tolstoy or Carnegie, or Wells or even Lloyd George? All that is really needful is the ability to read and understand English, this, and the sacred fire of high purposes. Books there are in English in plenty to spur on and to inspire. Bye-and-bye, under a free constitution, each Indian language will have such writers of its own in equal number, but that is not yet. Here are some recent works which may help those who wish to study the forces that weld the lives of men and the ideals to which they may cling: "Outlines of History" by H. G. Wells; "Prophets, Priests and Kings" and "Pillars of Society" by A. G. Gardiner; Abraham Lincoln, Complete Works (Century Edition); "What is and What might Be" by G. Holmes; "Social Reconstruction" by Bertrand Russell; "Principles of Revolution" and "International Politics" by Delisle Burns; "The meaning of Democracy" by Ivor Brown.

V

With these and similar works in his hands, each thinker can become a captain in the army of liberty, inspiring others, urging them

on in the great struggle for a free constitution. For it is to that field that duty now calls every educated Indian. Later on, when the sun shines on a free India, there will be ample scope in every field of human thought,—science, art, literature, education—for all who dare to own their own ideas. But just now their country claims them. It is for them to draw the conservatives out of the ruts of tradition and custom, to point out to them that, if they have been born under a bureaucracy, they can die under a free constitution. Let each man who has received an English education hold himself bound in honour to lead on his fellow-countrymen. There are hard knocks to be got, perhaps little or no material reward. What then? Let them recall the flashing words of Garibaldi when he called for volunteers for the march on Rome: “For food, you shall have hunger; for lodging, the cold ground; for reward, death.” In that spirit, serving their country, following the twin stars of freedom and liberty, they will pass on to victory. Captains in the host they will know how to lead on the embattled people of India. For to them will be given words that stab, thoughts that flame, and hearts that never yield.

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